



Edgware & Hendon Reform Synagogue

**ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT
OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR END 31 DECEMBER 2021**

118 STONEGROVE, EDGWARE, MIDDX, HA8 8AB
REGISTERED CHARITY NO 1172458

A constituent of Reform Judaism

SENIOR RABBI: RABBI MARK GOLDSMITH
RABBI: RABBI DEBBIE YOUNG-SOMERS
PRESIDENT: RICHARD HARRIS



Edgware & Hendon
Reform Synagogue
ק"ק לדור ודור

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

2021 has been almost as difficult a year as 2020 in that all activities and services have been overshadowed by the Coronavirus pandemic. However, although we have been mindful at all times of the safety of our community, we have learned to live with it, and to tailor everything around it. Having to organise things in line with government guidelines has been hard, but we have more than managed, and as the year progressed, more and more activities came back into the building, and I am so proud of the way in which we have coped.

In January we said a fond farewell to Rabbi Emily who left us to join West London Synagogue – a fantastic career move for her, but a loss to us. We wish her well for all her future endeavours. A third rabbi to join our team, Rabbi Mati Kirschenbaum, was not available to join us until after the High Holy Days, but now that he is here, I hope his rabbinate will flourish with us. In the time between Emily leaving and Mati joining us, we were fortunate to have Rabbi Roberta Harris-Eckstein as a locum. She brought with her great warmth and compassion, and we also learnt about such interesting things as the archaeology of the Bible! I hope we can call on her services again in the future should we need a stand-in.

In February Sarah Koster joined us as a Young Families Lead – her mission, to engage the young families already a part of our community with new and exciting activities, and to encourage those who have not yet taken that step, to join. We have seen an increase in numbers attending Kuddle Up Shabbat, Friday's Stay and Play, and also many new activities for parents with small children. It has been delightful to see the community centre full (covid allowing) with parents and their youngsters, getting to know one another and getting to know us. Sarah's work culminated this year in a baby blessing service for all those children born during the lockdown – it was wonderful to see the babies, ranging from 3 weeks to 18 months old, on our Bimah being formally welcomed into the community.

After many years using the Community Centre, the Jewish Care Day Centre left our property in March, and ever mindful of the need to maintain our beautiful building, in the Spring/Summer of 2021 we refurbished the spaces used by Bookies Babes and the Nagila nursery. We have seen an increase in numbers in both areas, with new opportunities for membership growth.

Moving into 2022 we shall refurbish the kitchen area in the Community Centre, and also the main kitchen in the synagogue.

In the Summer of 2021, a forward strategy day was held looking at how we wish to move forward as a reform, progressive shul. We looked at how we want to attract new members as well as how to engage existing ones. We also looked at how to make the best use of our property. You will see increasing evidence of our deliberations as we introduce new initiatives into 2022.

As I said at the beginning of this piece, although 2021 was still a difficult year, the shul has not stood still – we have continued with our activities and our growth. I want to thank all those professional staff and volunteers who have kept everything going. I am extremely proud to be the chairman of EHRS.

Janet Brand



COMMUNITY DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

2020 and 2021 seemed to have blurred into one another. From the beginning of 2021, we still had a “lockdown” and continued with “working from home”. I am pleased that our “business continuity” systems held up and the running of the synagogue, although remotely, continued without interruption. Most of the activities and procedures still relied on the technology with meetings, teaching, chatting and services continuing online. Zoom and Livestreaming came into common language keeping all our members and friends in touch. Unfortunately, even many happy occasions and their celebrations had to be postponed. This included the weddings that were planned during that period.

As some facilities opened up and tried to move back in some direction towards normality, we approached the high holydays. We welcomed many to the services “in-person” and still many, sometimes hundreds of people, joining and watching online through the Livestreaming.

As staff started to return to the building we put Covid procedures in place to start some further “in-person” activities and some “hybrid”. Wearing of masks was required for the rest of the year. Staff and volunteers carried out their Covid tests at home on a regular basis to ensure that everyone was kept safe and that they felt comfortable and safe at work.

Many other procedures have changed shape and brought up to date. The EHRS postage bill has increased over the past few years. We are now trying to do more via email and via the website. Please do make sure that we have email addresses for all members of your family. Our membership database, DOROT as in “generations”, received further upgrade. As part of the improvement to our systems we changed from using Standing Orders to Direct Debit in preparation for membership subscriptions.

The working environment was reviewed as well as the teams. The library was moved from the first to second floor. This enabled the room to be fitted out to accommodate the merged Education and Youth team. The three members of the finance team, Vicky Donhue, Jinii Patel and Ros Warshaw, together with our Communications and Marketing Officer, Bonnie Lemer, moved to new offices for better structure and working environment.

Premises hire: As summer of 2021 approached some restrictions were lifted, this enabled external groups to resume their use of the site once a Risk Assessment had been done. We also started to receive bookings for functions for later in 2021 and into 2022.

Caretaking: During the lockdown the building still had to be kept in good order and maintained. During the period of little activity some of the caretaking team were placed on “furlough”. Many thanks to Joao Nena and his team for looking after the site and getting it back into use.

Marketing and Communications was a key facility during the year. Members were kept in contact and up to date including when onsite activities started to return. The weekly email newsletter “Our Week Ahead” and the magazine “LeDor VaDor” were key to this strategy together with our website. ‘Finding Freedom at Home’ was our Pesach 2021 brochure, for all Pesach services, activities and an online Seder. A High Holy Day brochure for those who wanted to join in person or online from home, helped to enhance the High Holy Days for everyone.

I cannot conclude without thanking our office manager and my PA, Martine Allen, for her support and guidance throughout this very difficult period. It has been a trying year. Everyone has worked hard from where ever they are, often beyond their normal hours. Many thanks to them all.

Perry Newton



RABBIS' REPORT:

Early 2021 we were again in the depths of the pandemic. We continued every Shabbat to offer our Classic service to a good sized congregation mixed between on line and, from April 2021, in person.

We had many Bar and Bat Mitzvah experiences to celebrate where only 15 of the family were allowed to be with us in the Synagogue, ensuring that these celebrations were as meaningful as possible. We also led weekly parallel and festival services engaging diverse members of our congregation of all ages in worship. This year's innovations included our Cornerstone Explanatory service aimed at those new to Jewish life, the Early Risers Service built with Jeremy Harrod's leadership, broadening our Friday Night Lights such as our service together with a Texas Reform congregation after the Texas Synagogue hostage taking incident.

The EHRS Young Families team made sure that there are 'Shabbat Tote Bags' helping children who come to services to focus while they are with us.

We offered evening prayers in the Synagogue enabling our bereaved families to have shiva prayers for a loved one, as it was unsafe to do so in private homes. We are extremely grateful to the excellent team of prayer leaders (shlichei tzibbur) who support us in doing this in person and on zoom week after week.

Our family services on festivals have been particularly effective and we seem to be turning round the attitude of Jewish Day School parents into seeing coming to Synagogue for a family activity as a positive and wanted experience. We are working with Andrew Woolstone and the membership group to hold successful listening evenings to our Jewish Day School parents.

We worked with volunteers to create a meaningful High Holy Days in continued difficult circumstances, welcoming members back to our Synagogue whilst others were able to participate in the services thoroughly from home. We brought the Friday night services into the Beit Tefillah (Sanctuary) and enhancing the music of these services, making it an especially welcoming space for our Bat and Bat Mitzvah children and their families. We support our popular weekly young family offerings Kuddle Up Shabbat and Shabbat Stay and Play as leaders of prayer and song.

We are intimately involved with the process of building the membership of our Synagogue, both in terms of recruitment of new members & engagement of current members, as well as talking to those thinking of leaving. We worked to create new ways of our members getting to know & build relationships with each other that gives ERHS membership meaning – our EHRS Together Groups, these include Cook a Long and Beer and Shiur. We work with our Community Care Team to ensure that pastoral needs among our congregation are responded to and looked after as well as we can. We also support our Community Care team in their 'Let's Talk' groups and events which address particular issues around day to day mental health that are real in our congregation.

We are deeply involved in the Education and Youth work of our Synagogue. We co-teach and develop the Bar and Bat Mitzvah programme meaning that we get to know all of the young people well before their special Shabbat. This is also a major membership gateway through the quality of the programme and our tutor team. We help with Orot, again aiming to get to know all of the children and their families. We regularly visit J-Coss and Clore Shalom.

Rabbi Mark is the Reform steering Rabbi of EcoSynagogue and thus was at COP-26 this year. Rabbi Debbie is a trustee of Faiths for the Climate. We aim to bring EHRS values to make change in the Jewish and wider world. Rabbi Debbie is featured regularly on Radio London, Three Counties Radio, Radio 2- Pause for Thought, on BBC Sunday Morning live and more. She is one of the three rabbis who create the popular Rabbiting On Podcast and helps with the Progressively Jewish Podcast and are regular writers in the Jewish News

From January 2021 we were aided by Rabbi Roberta Harris-Eckstein as interim team Rabbi and we are very grateful for her help which continues on an ad hoc basis. Rabbi Mati Kirschenbaum joined our team in November 2022.

We are very grateful to our Rabbis' PA, June Lewis who aids us in every way that she can. We are blessed by working with Janet Brand our Chair and line manager. Her wise and tireless support & willingness to always encourage us to build this community is invaluable.



We are delighted to work with an ever supportive and stimulating group of lay members who are the backbone of the Synagogue, including Senior Warden Keith Price, Chair of Services Robert Brand and High Holy Days Co-ordinator, Michael Weber.

It is not possible to name everyone here and indeed it is a measure of the success of our Synagogue that there are so many dedicated volunteers who make this community an empowered and effective community to belong to. These leaders are joined by hundreds of other people who volunteer time to our community in the great variety of activities and encounters on which our community stand – for Torah, Avodah and Gemilut Chassadim, as a House of Prayer, a House of Study and a House of Meeting and Care.

Rabbi Mark Goldsmith

SERVICES:

The Services Committee is responsible for the planning and operation of all Synagogue services in conjunction with the Rabbis, Wardens and Council. The Committee meets quarterly and receives reports from the Senior Rabbi and the Senior Warden on recent and forthcoming services. Although the Education Committee manages Children's and Youth Services, the Committee has input into the timing and format of these services. During the year we held approximately 300 services. We continue to assist the Rabbis in leading Shiva prayers for mourners. All our services have been greatly enhanced by the choir. Services again had to be planned in a Covid world where the year started in lockdown but gradually opened up to allow our services to be attended in person in addition to remaining online. We are gradually bringing members back for in person services but we are keeping live streaming and online services for those unable to attend in person or who feel uncomfortable returning at this time.

We continue to have Friday afternoon services for our very young members, and have changed the Bar/Bat Mitzvah classes to Friday afternoons, resulting in our Friday night services becoming more popular with families. We also now have tote bags available with age-appropriate activities and books to keep our younger members occupied during main services. In October we held a special service to bless our pets which coincided with Sedra Noah. In November we held a baby blessing service to welcome into our community all the babies born during the pandemic.

We have continued to offer a variety of alternative services, including more musical services and also outdoor services on Stanmore Common and in Borehamwood.

The Services Committee expresses its thanks to all those people, too numerous to mention individually, who have assisted in maintaining the spirituality and organisation of all our services.

When planning our services, the Committee have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on Public Benefit, and in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. EHRS is committed to enabling as many people as possible to pray in our Synagogue and we welcome new members as well as visitors, including those of different faiths, and through our broadcast services, we are able to reach a wide audience both within the UK and worldwide. The Services Committee believes that thereby we maintain our Public Benefit commitment.

HHD: Another complicated year as we had come out of lockdowns but the country was still in a very nervous state. We started in February and had monthly meetings for the next 7 months. We were back in the synagogue but the majority of our members still choose to use the livestreaming option to participate. The success of the HHD brochure last year was replicated again with even more interaction and balancing between the requirements for members attending in person and those expecting a similar offering online to the previous year. We produced a rounded programme, providing classical services as well as alternative offerings for those that wished for something different, enabling being able to swap between the two. Due to smaller numbers we were able to use the upper synagogue solely for the children's and alternate services giving it a more prominent position and were well attended.



The EHRS
Sukkah 2021



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Rosh Hashanah was as early as it could be in September, so meant a lot of hard work and effort had to be put in through the summer holidays to ensure everything was ready on time for the community - a very big thank you to all involved in ensuring this extremely complicated operation went off smoothly.

EDUCATION:

NAGILA: Nagila used the academic year to explore the cycle of Jewish festivals and also enjoyed learning about different cultures. We have had continuous support and regular involvement from all members of the Rabbinical Team. We also work closely with the EHRS Young Families Lead to promote their activities to our families. Over the summer break the nursery was completely renovated and we returned in September with a new cohort ready to enjoy the enhanced space. In November we participated in the global event - Mitzvah Day, with parents and children working together to support a number of charities. We also participated in Just ONE Tree day and the parents fundraising efforts raised enough to plant a further 95 trees to contribute to global reforestation. Nagila is open to members and non-members alike and provides a warm introduction for many young families to EHRS.



Nagila on Mitzvah Day 2021

OROT: We returned to full in person classes after Pesach. It was welcomed by families whose children happily returned. We held some very special joint Zoom events such as the 'Chocolate Seder' organised by Reform Judaism, where we joined with 400+ other children from around the country - where our children created and led the Dayenu. Thanks to volunteer driver's we delivered resource packs to all our children so that they could participate. The children also created and buried a COVID time capsule.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH: Our 1:1 tutoring continues mostly online as it offers more flexibility . We introduced a new mentoring programme as one way of keeping our post b'nei mitzvah students involved, who become mentors to the next generation of students. It is lovely to see the positive and supportive relationships that grow between them. Each of our BBM term finishes with a special celebration of the students learning. For the first time in two year's we were able to celebrate the gemilut chasidim term with a 'fair' that the b'nei mitzvah students put on for the younger children at EHRS. For the first time we held a 'Transitioning to Secondary School' event for our Year 6 students, which saw our Year 8 students giving advice and tips to them, which was amazing to witness the maturity and wisdom of our students.



BBM Mentoring Programme

ALL THINGS JEWISH (ATJ): We gradually came out of lockdown with more programmes and events happening in person. We continue to offer a varied online programme and many events are hybrid because we want to remain accessible to all our members. For example: The Rabbi Kraft Memorial Book Club led by author and EHRS member Debra Barnes remains online and because of this can have special author appearances to talk about their books. We held some lovely cross generation events with the children in Orot; for Tu B'shevat we had Zoom visits with people in Israel and in Australia, and we held a special Sephardi Day when we learnt about the Jewish communities in Iraq, the Caribbean and Tzvat. These events were enhanced by special guests such as Miriam Halamy who shared the story of her husband growing up in Iraq.

YOUTH DEPARTMENT:

The youth department held various events and holiday schemes during the year including half terms, Passover and summer holidays. The schemes were well attended and, where necessary, all within Covid guidelines and held online activities to maintain contact with our young people.

We received positive feedback from parents, many of whom said how included their children felt and how new friendships were formed. We also provided additional support to children with special educational needs, all of which were able to be actively involved in all activities. Liaising with parents and local experts, we were able to provide a meaningful experience for all of our participants. Our new team of leaders completed their hadracha course, were awarded their certificates and are now actively involved in all our events. Our young leaders are also supporting the bar/bat mitzvah students with their studies on Friday afternoons.

We continued to work closely with the education department, collaborating together on religious holiday events and fun days out for our members. We also are working more and more with our welfare department, focusing on young people's mental health & the effects of social media on their lives. Our uniform groups continued online and, where possible, in person. These were all well attended and continue to grow in numbers and success.

We have continued to liaise with RSY (Reform Synagogue Youth) and are looking forward to planning events, which will involve other reform synagogues around the UK. We have also been able to use their expertise in mental health and have invited their leaders to share their knowledge with our young leaders.

We employed a new youth worker who has settled in well and already had a positive impact. He shows huge commitment to his work and is very popular amongst members and leaders alike.



Spring Break Play Scheme 2021

WITHIN EHRS:

NEW OPTIONS: Because of the coronavirus pandemic, we were unable to continue with the extremely popular Wednesday Bridge afternoons for most of the year. However, we re-started again in November, although the numbers attending each week have now been lower than previously, as older people are still cautious with mixing socially at the moment. During the 'lockdown', we continued, through using Zoom, with the monthly light-hearted topical discussions, 'Schmoozing with the Rabbis'. All our Rabbis contributed, each in their own individual style, to make it lively and popular.

KIDDUSHIM: Another year completely affected by the pandemic - for 6 months there was no kiddush and then we cautiously provided a wrapped chollah roll and kiddush wine. Sukkot allowed us to trial an increased offering but ensuring it was covid friendly (including crisp packets and sealed cakes/biscuits) which was very well received by members. This enabled us to also put on a lovely kiddush to finally celebrate Rabbi Debbie's inauguration with over 200 attending in October. Families are now able to have a pared down B'nei Mitzvah kiddush, which they have very much appreciated. We will continue to maintain sensible food handling to ensure members safety but are delighted that those attending are thoroughly enjoying a return to normality and the chance to meet up again to chat with friends after the service and enjoy the kiddush.

YOUNG ADULTS: The Young Adults group ran events including Beer & Shiur and Cookalongs supported by Rabbi Debbie Young-Somers.



Hamantaschen at our Purim Cook-a-Long

NOT THE WOMEN'S GUILD: This group did not meet during the past year due to the pandemic, and have no plans at present to meet in the immediate future.

COMMUNITY CARE:

Community Care & Wellbeing offer members support, advice & advocacy through difficult times in their lives. We offer practical and emotional support often when people are at their most vulnerable. Our strong community networks allow us to work in partnership with external organisations.

There were 79 member deaths in the community during 2021 and an additional 32 families were affected by the deaths of non-member relatives. Surviving relatives were offered telephone support during 2021. Demand remained high from the bereaved for support and as a result 2 bereavement social groups started in 2021 both run by members for different age groups with a third due to start in 2022 for the 70 plus age group.

The number of active community circles reduced during 2021 as restrictions were lifted at times during the year. Whilst there was no longer the need for the same level of support from the community circles it became clear that strong community connections had been made as a result of their introduction.

Community Care encourages friendships to help reduce loneliness and promote active inclusion in our community through the monthly lunch club, which reopened in October 2021. Prior to this lunch club volunteers were in contact with regular attendees by phone and as in 2021 many received honey cakes at Rosh Hashanah.

The EHRS Memory Way Café provides a regular social gathering for people living with dementia and their family carers and until November 2021 was operating on zoom. Since November it is now run on a hybrid basis, in house and on Zoom. It remains popular with both members and non-members

We have 395 members over the age of 85 and Telenet calls are made by volunteers who provide invaluable feedback on each call. Telenet is a vital outreach initiative that has allowed EHRS to get to know its membership and their needs. Any concerns are followed up by Community Care staff. Befrienders remained unable to visit more isolated members but have been making regular telephone calls.

CHEVRA KADISHA: Due to the Covid epidemic both the male and female groups have not done many Tohorot. The female group restarted in the middle of 2021 and have managed to perform a couple, but

with members of the teams being vulnerable and unable to help for other personal reasons we are not back to the pre Covid levels. The men's team are not back at all. We usually have an annual dinner involving all Chevrah groups but this year it was postponed as Sharon Calo (the proprietor of the funeral director) passed away suddenly. It is now run by her son Ashley, and daughter in law Lisa who have been carrying out the ritual for our members. There is a definite need to recruit new members of both teams and I hope that we can organise a training program in the near future.

ASSOCIATED GROUPS:

JACS: Because of Covid19, only 8 meetings were held during period 28 October to 16 December, consisting of 6 talks and 2 talks with musical screen accompaniment. Besides the 2 musical events which members particularly enjoy, the talks were educational and informative, consisting of Black History and Black Lives Matter, Stephen Spielberg, Holocaust Memorial Trust, current affairs interspersed with comic poetry readings, history of Harrods, and adventures of a Jewish lady sailor. The musicals were a tribute to Larry Adler, and Jews have written the best Christmas songs. Attendances varied between 17 to 44 people.

MEMBERSHIP:

The function of the membership committee is to actively encourage new members whilst also looking after our existing membership. The main goal of the committee in 2021 was to implement the new member process and start working with families with children at Jewish day schools. The main initiative in the past year were:

1. Work with families with Children at Jewish Day Schools to understand their needs
2. Implement the new member process resulting from the previous listening campaign

STATISTICS AS AT	2021	2020
MEMBER FAMILIES	1,890	1,908
NUMBER OF ADULTS	2,855	2,793
NUMBER OF CHILDREN	445	456
NUMBER OF AFFILIATES	22	14
Jewish with burial rights elsewhere		
NUMBER OF ASSOCIATES	16	16
Non-Jewish with EHRS Jewish partner		
NUMBER OF CORNERSTONE MEMBERS (new)	1	2
NUMBER OF EHRS FRIENDS (new)	1	1
Non-Jewish without EHRS Jewish partner		

TZEDAKAH:

We are delighted to inform the community that we raised just under £30,000 in our appeal last September for our chosen charities, Jewish Blind & Disabled, Camp Simcha, Leo Baeck Summer Scheme in Israel, My Israel, Magen David Adom, Noah's Ark Children's Hospice and Goods For Goods. Each year a small group of people choose from among the various charities that approach us during the year for help, and decide which charities will best suit our community. These are put out to you all in the High Holy Days Appeal.



Pirkei Avot 5:13: A person who gives charity, and wants others to give, is pious.

YOUNG FAMILIES:

January to March 2021 saw us deliver through another Lockdown, and we successfully engaged our young family members and wider community of non-members, with creative online programming, including weekly Kuddle Up Shabbats to special interactive Zoom events celebrating Purim and Pesach. We delivered Shabbat dinosaur activity packs and challot to the doorsteps of all young family members.

In March 2021 we began to move over to in person delivery, launching Shabbat Stay and play, introducing a monthly in person Kuddle Up and celebrating key festivals together. Participants, which include many non-members have expressed lovely feedback on how much they enjoy our activities and feel welcomed by EHRs. We created new baby packs for members and service tote bags to involve children visitors in the Classic service. A particular highlight was our Lockdown baby blessing in November and our huge Chanukah fair in Dec 21 attended by over 100 people.



Shabbat Stay & Play



Shabbat Activity Packs delivered to Young Families

SECURITY:

As with 2020, for part of the year under a government lockdown, with lockdown security has not really needed to be provided but, since re-opening, this has mainly been carried out with paid guards and limited volunteers. Volunteers from both the security committee and also members of the community have been extremely thin on the ground and this is something we need to work on now that attendances are increasing so, we can make sure our community is protected whilst in our building and also whilst leaving it, we certainly welcome all volunteers to contact us.

We ran the largest security operation over the High Holidays, mainly with members of the security team with some volunteers, member numbers were much lower than in previous years, last year (2020) not included as all was carried out over Zoom, the security operation ran very smoothly and thankfully no incidents of any kind were reported.

This year was the first year under new leadership of the security committee and subject to enough community interest, we would like to arrange training for our community which, the CST are willing to do but only if there is enough demand.

BEYOND EHRS:

CULTURAL & HERITAGE GROUP: We began the year with a Zoom tour of Jerusalem put together and narrated live by Jeremy Leigh, focusing on the borderlines of the city. At Tu B'Shevat we joined the curators of the Jerusalem Botanic Garden as they planted a tree in the garden. When the Gaza conflict escalated and many of our friends in Israel were having to cope with rocket attacks we joined with Rabbis and educators in Jerusalem and Holon to understand the pressures that they were under and their actions for peace. We held a joint Shabbat service online with the Rabbi-Principal Ofek Meir of the Leo Baeck Center in Haifa. Orot also held a joint class with 5th Grade students in Haifa & established pen pal relationships. We participated in and co-led the Reform Judaism Yom HaZikaron and Yom Ha'Atzmaut commemoration and celebration, also online, with communities around the UK. We held two Israeli film nights in our EHRS 'EveryJew Cinema'. We rounded off the year with a session brought to us by the UJIA on the challenge and great efforts to teach Arabic to today's Israeli students.

INTERFAITH: Lock downs and Corona restrictions, have meant our face to face and community wide interfaith work has yet to recover and continue to grow as we would like it to. However we remain committed to ensuring it is a part of our communal life, and both Rabbi Mark and Rabbi Debbie continue to engage in interfaith work.

We hosted talks by Christian clergy at both Shavuot Tikkun Leyl and at a Shabbat Shiur pre-Rosh Hashanah where Rev Suzanne Vernon York and Rabbi Debbie explore Christian and Jewish approaches to repentance. We also welcomed local clergy to Rabbi Debbie's induction. Both our Rabbis also attended Barnet's Clergy Together meetings, bringing together clergy from across all the faith communities in Barnet. Rabbi Debbie represented Reform Judaism at the Duchess of Cambridge' Carol Concert as part of the interfaith delegation. She also became a trustee of Faiths for The Climate, an interfaith charity bringing faith communities together to campaign and work against climate change. Rabbi Mark and Rabbi Mati co-led and organised the Edgware Remembrance Day service together with local Christian and Buddhist clergy. Rabbi Mark also led the Borough of Barnet Holocaust Memorial Day interfaith service. We hope to build more community involvement in our interfaith work in the coming year.

SOCIAL ACTION: Between January and May 2021 and again from October 2021 to the end of the year, Together in Barnet (TiB) provided temporary accommodation to people experiencing homelessness in a hotel. Volunteers provided home cooked breakfasts and dinners and delivered them to up to 16 guests on allocated nights. A member of the EHRS community has been a trustee of Together in Barnet for the duration of the year.

The EHRS community continued to work in partnership with Career Ready, a social mobility charity that prepares A level students for the world of work. EHRS volunteers were members of the Local Advisory Board at The London Academy school as well as mentors for their Year 12 and 13 students.

EHRS sent 2 volunteers to The Separated Child Foundation to compile Arrival Packs and Sleep Packs for unaccompanied child refugees.

The EHRS community collected donations and sent £289 to World Jewish Relief.

JEWISH AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS:

AJEX: Edgware AJEX and district branch held a few meetings in the shul live rather than on Zoom and it was nice to make contact once again without having to ask members to unmute! We held 2 remembrance services one in this shul on 6.11 and the other at Edgware United (13.11) which followed the same format as in previous years. On 14th the branch held our annual Remembrance service at the Edgware War memorial under the auspices of the Royal British Legion coordinated by Andrew Dissmore. The following Sunday we attended the AJEX National parade which this year the honour of leading it fell to your member Ron Shelley MBE who described it as "a totally unbelievable experience".

JEWISH JOINT BURIAL SOCIETY: All the members of EHRS are covered for their burial through their membership of the shul, and we work closely with the rabbis, administrative staff and care staff dealing with any deaths in the community, arranging the funerals, stone-settings, sometimes catering in our new gathering hall at the JJBS Woodland Cemetery. We see our role as taking care of not just the how to of a funeral, in other words, what needs to be done in law, and administratively for a funeral to take place, but also taking care of the family of the bereaved.



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We cover 44 synagogues who are mostly a mix of Reform and Masorti, but we also have 3 Liberal synagogues and two independent synagogues. We offer mixed faith burial, either in our Woodland Cemetery, or in our Lawn cemetery, or traditional burial in the Western Cemetery, and for ex-Hendon members in Edwarebury or New Southgate. We also carry out cremations at Golders Green or at other crematoria that may be more local to where the family live. When members join over the age of 50 there is a late entry payment to be made – we can facilitate payment terms should these be necessary and likewise for Woodland burial the premium can be paid off over a period of time. We also now offer catering in our Woodland Hall, both after funerals and stone-settings, albeit for stone-settings on Sundays it is very much first come, first served.

MOVEMENT FOR REFORM JUDAISM: The Movement for Reform Judaism's purpose is to promote Reform Judaism and support and nurture our individual communities and give its 43 synagogues across the UK and their congregants an identity and sense of belonging as Reform Jews. Our Movement is run by members for its members and people, relationships and partnership are fundamental to its existence and success. This should be fuelled by communication and transparency, together with clear values – such as collaboration, trust, respect, and honesty. It is through this alignment and the mutuality and effectiveness of the relationships between its key stakeholders – the members, the Rabbinate, and the Movement – that we will create success as a Movement and within our synagogues.

In recent times our focus on this has wavered, hampered greatly by the Covid pandemic, separating us from our communities and friends, creating a loss of connection and uncertainty about our Jewish lives. MRJ wants to help renew and reinvigorate our Reform Jewish lives – for all generations. Our plan is to work with our synagogues, to work collectively to overcome the post Covid challenges and embrace the changed world in which we find ourselves.

We are delighted to say that EHRS, along with other communities, is playing a constructive & collaborative part in this process. We are grateful for the positive contributions of your community and, especially, from the rabbinic team, honorary officers and council. We are determined to find ways to make our shuls welcoming spaces for all. Rest assured your rabbinic, professional, and lay leadership will be working hard to bring this to you at EHRS.

Additionally, this work will be invaluable in helping MRJ with future planning, deciding together with our members what the Movement's work and services should be and how to fund this sustainably. We are already progressing several other important initiatives, including work on safeguarding and wellbeing, reviewing our RSY and youth programmes, modernising our governance, recruiting a new MRJ professional leader, and, more than ever, delivering valuable services for our communities, ranging from our Reform Beth Din to assistance with employment practices.

We are extremely grateful for EHRS playing its part in this endeavour and making Reform Judaism meaningful for us all.

BOARD OF DEPUTIES: The Board's first virtual Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACRE) conference was held recently, with nearly 80 attendees. The conference was intended to upskill Jewish representatives on SACRE. Ind was the first in a series to support Jewish SACRE representatives.

The Board responded to Lord Mann's request for submissions ahead of his next review of antisemitism in the UK. Blackwells was found to be selling *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* online, which included an explanatory note that refused to confirm or deny that the text is a forgery, and gave credibility to the antisemitic ideas in the book. After the Board's intervention, the book was removed from sale.

Despite being pressed by the Board of Deputies and the CST and the London Jewish Forum, the Metropolitan Police have yet to identify the suspects in the case of the antisemitic incident against the young people on a bus in London's Oxford Street during Chanukah at the end of November 2021. The Board will continue to pursue the matter. Also the Board met BBC Director General Tim Davie, to discuss the misreporting of the incident, the slandering of its victims and the BBC's lethargy in withdrawing and apologising for its reporting. The Board's complaint with the Corporation's Executive Complaints Unit was partially upheld. However there is dismay that the BBC continues to justify certain erroneous editorial decisions that cloud the issue and will compound the distress faced by the victims. Ofcom is now investigating the incident.



The Board met Department for Health and Social Care officials regarding the digitisation of death certificates. There may be the opportunity to record Jewish status, which may assist timely release of bodies and the use of less invasive post-mortem investigation methods if it acts as a prompt to healthcare and legal professionals.

The Jewish Manifesto for Local Government has now been drafted and the Board is working on gaining support from prominent councillors, particularly in those local authorities with sizeable Jewish populations.

The Board released a joint statement with the Jewish Leadership Council condemning the recent Amnesty International report, which labelled Israel as 'apartheid'. This was in line with other communal organisations and the main consensus of the British community.

EHRS ANNUAL TRUSTEES REPORT FOR 2021

TRUSTEES OF THE EDGWARE & HENDON REFORM SYNAGOGUE

**ELECTED TO THE BOARD OF EHRS,
26 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**Mrs F Aitman
Mrs J Brand
Mr R Brand
Mrs D Bryk
Mr N Flash
Mrs S Garson
Mr J Harrod
Mr B Konyon
Mr K Maddison
Mr D Mendoza-Wolfson
Mr D Mitchell
Mr M Lerman
Mrs L Perez
Mr E Sander
Mrs J Sigalov
Mr B Trainis
Mrs J Weber
Mr M Weber
Mr A Woolstone**

Signed by:

J Brand - Trustee & Chairman

M Weber - Trustee & Honorary Secretary



**Edgware & Hendon
Reform Synagogue**
ק"ק לדור ודור